

BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

VALERIE DICKINSON,
Appellant,
v.
DEPARTMENT OF RETIREMENT SYSTEMS,
Respondent.

) Case No. ALLO-05-0009
)
) FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF
) LAW AND ORDER OF THE BOARD
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I. INTRODUCTION

Hearing on Exceptions. Pursuant to RCW 41.64.060 and WAC 358-01-040, this appeal came on for hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair, on Appellant's exceptions to the director's determination dated July 7, 2005. The hearing was held at the office of the Personnel Appeals Board in Olympia, Washington, on December 7, 2005. GERALD L. MORGEN, Member, listened to the recorded proceedings, reviewed the file and exhibits and participated in this decision.

Appearances. Appellant Valerie Dickinson was present and was represented by Marian Gonzales, Employee Relations Specialist, with the Washington Public Employees Association. Becky Daniels, Human Resources Manager, represented Respondent Department of Retirement Systems.

Background. Appellant submitted a Classification Questionnaire (CQ) dated January 14, 2005, requesting that her Fiscal Analyst 2 (FA 2) position (# 0092) be reallocated to the Fiscal Analyst 3

1 (FA 3) classification. By letter dated February 24, 2005, Human Resource Manager Chris
2 Greenwalt notified Appellant that her position # 0092 was properly allocated as an FA 2. Ms.
3 Greenwalt noted that Appellant submitted a previous CQ dated September 26, 2003, in which a
4 desk audit was performed and position # 0092 was allocated to the FA 2 classification. When
5 comparing both CQs, Ms. Greenwald determined there were no changes in Appellant's duties and
6 that the primary focus of position # 0092 did not meet the senior level and was not assigned lead
7 responsibilities for professional fiscal staff.

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9 Appellant appealed Ms. Greenwalt's decision to the Department of Personnel, and on May 4, 2005,
10 Paul L. Peterson, Personnel Hearings Officer, held an allocation review. By letter dated July 7,
11 2005, Mr. Peterson informed Appellant that she did not meet the requirements of the FA 3 position.
12 Mr. Peterson concluded Appellant did not perform lead work at the higher level; was not assigned
13 senior level duties, such as responsibility for a financial system, duties in budget forecasting and
14 analyzing revenue projections; or an assignment as a senior investment accountant.

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16 **Summary of Appellant's Argument.** Appellant asserts her CQ clearly designates her position as a
17 lead position. Appellant contends she is a lead worker for the agency's cash management function,
18 that she assists in design and development, oversees the reconciliation and balancing of AFRS In-
19 process reports, and assists staff with complicated cash transactions. Further, Appellant argues she
20 organizes and analyzes financial information for the State Investment Board and State Treasurer
21 and, as a result, argues she is performing higher level work. Appellant also contends she directs,
22 coordinates, trains, and assists other FA 2s and fiscal technicians and asserts she does not work
23 under direct supervision. Appellant asserts she performs professional level accounting duties that
24 go beyond the journey level identified in the FA 2 classification and argues she should be allocated
25 to the FA 3 classification.

1 **Summary of Respondent's Argument.** Respondent asserts that Appellant's CQ reflects the duties
2 best described by the journey level professional work of the FA 2 classification. Respondent asserts
3 the department reallocated Appellant's position # 0092 from a Cashier 4 to an FA 2, based on a CQ
4 submitted by Appellant in September 2003, describing the same duties as those listed on the
5 January 2005 CQ. Respondent argues that Appellant performs lead work for clerical, fiscal
6 technician, and other non-professional positions; therefore, she does not meet the distinguishing
7 characteristics of the financial lead worker outlined in the FA 3 class specification. Respondent
8 further argues the duties Appellant performs, such as keeping track of pension balances, monitoring
9 cash flow trends, and reconciliation of the AFRS In-process reports, are fairly routine in nature and
10 do not encompass the senior level duties required of an FA 3. Therefore, Respondent argues
11 Appellant is properly allocated to the FA 2 classification.

12
13 **Primary Issue.** Whether the director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated
14 to the Financial Analyst 2 classification should be affirmed.

15
16 **Relevant Classifications.** Financial Analyst 2, class code 12106; Financial Analyst 3, class code
17 12107.

18
19 The definition for a Financial Analyst 2 states: "Performs professional journey level financial
20 review and analysis of accounting, budgeting, auditing or fiscal data . . ." The distinguishing
21 characteristics note that this position works at an experienced level and makes decisions
22 independently under general supervision within the assigned area of responsibility. Examples of
23 duties performed at the FA 2 level include financial report analysis; financial system procedures
24 development and implementation; estimate revenue forecasts or expenditure projections; prepares
25 and monitors automated or manual financial reports; and advises management about current
26 financial status and fiscal changes needed to the system. Additionally, an FA 2 position may lead

1 or supervise clerical, fiscal technicians and other non-professional positions involved in a variety of
2 fiscal recordkeeping tasks.

3
4 The definition for a Financial Analyst 3 states: “Functions as a financial lead worker or performs
5 professional senior level financial review and analysis of accounting, budgeting, auditing or fiscal
6 data . . .” The distinguishing characteristics at the FA 3 level delineate the following criteria: 1)
7 lead worker positions are designated by management to lead one or more professional staff; 2)
8 senior level financial positions design, develop, install, coordinate and maintain one or more
9 financial systems; 3) senior level financial positions analyze revenue projections, budget or
10 expenditure forecasts for a management specified and designated geographic area and the
11 designation must be in writing by the appointing authority; or 4) functions as a senior investment
12 accountant.

13
14 **Decision of the Board.** The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best
15 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a
16 measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that
17 work is performed. Also, a position review is not a comparison of work performed by employees in
18 similar positions. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular
19 position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the
20 class which best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v.
21 Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

22
23 While Appellant’s CQ indicates that she works in a lead position, her immediate supervisor
24 disagrees with her assessment of duties and clarifies that Appellant acts as a lead worker to a fiscal
25 technician and not to the professional level staff required at the FA 3 level. Appellant’s supervisor
26 also notes that no substantial changes have occurred to warrant reallocation. In fact, a comparison

1 of Appellant's September 2003 CQ, which reallocated position # 0092 from a Cashier 4 to an FA 2,
2 and her January 2005 CQ reflects identical duties. Appellant clearly has an important role in
3 ensuring the agency's cash management functions work smoothly and accurately. However, the
4 majority of Appellant's professional duties are performed at the journey level, for instance
5 monitoring and maintaining cash flow activities as opposed to making senior level accounting
6 decisions, and those duties best fit the descriptions outlined in the FA 2 class specification.

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8 **Conclusion.** The appeal on exceptions by Appellant should be denied, and the Director's
9 determination dated July 7, 2005, should be affirmed and adopted.

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11 **V. ORDER**

12 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Valerie
13 Dickinson is denied, and the attached Director's determination, dated July 7, 2005, is affirmed and
14 adopted.

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16 DATED this _____ day of _____, 2006.

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18 WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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20 _____
21 Walter T. Hubbard, Chair

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23 _____
24 Gerald L. Morgen, Member